

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 5560

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TAGS: PINR, IR
SUBJ: RESURGENCE PARTY SHAKE UP

REF: TEHRAN 5513

BEGIN SUMMARY. FOLLOWING CRITICISM BY THE SHAH AT HIS PRESS
CONFERENCE MAY 13, THE GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED RESURGENCE PARTY
HAD UNDERGONE A NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES AND HAS HELD
TWO INTRAPARTY ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. MEDIA CRITICISM AND PUBLIC APATHY WITH REGARD TO PARTY
ACTIVITIES PRECEDED RESIGNATIONS BY THE TWO PARTY WING LEADERS.
HUSHANG ANSARY, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF NIOC, RESIDGNE AS COORDI-
NATOR OF THE CONSTRUCTIVE WING ON MAY 31. HE WAS FOLLOWED ON
JUNE 4 BY ABDOL MAJID MAJIDI, HEAD OF EMPRESS FARAH'S FOUNDA-
TION, WHO GAVE UP HIS POSITION AS COORDINATOR OF THE PROGRESSIVE
WING. BOTH LEADERS CITED THEIR OTHER GOVERNMENT DUTIES AS
LEAVING THEM INSUFFICIENT TIME FOR PARTY RESPONSIBILITIES.
THEIR RESIGNATIONS WERE ACCOMPANIED BY MEDIA COMMENTARY STRES-
SSING TIME HAS COME TO PUT LIFE INTO RESURGENCE PARTY IF IT IS
TO HAVE IMPOACT ON IRANIAN LIFE AND BE WORTHY OF PUBLIC
SUPPORT. SPECULATION RE SUCCESSORS TO ANSARY AND MAJIDI HAS
FOCUSED ON INDIVIDUALS WITH LOWER GOVERNMENT PROFILE WHO
WOULD BE ABLE TO DEVOTE MORE ENERGY TO PARTY ACTIVITIES.

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2. IT IS BECOMING INCREASINLGY CLEAR THAT THE PARTY STRUCTURE
WILL BE REORGANIZED AND A THIRD WING ESTABLISHED. HUSHANG
NAHAVANDI, FORMER CHANCELLOR OF TEHRAN UNIVERSITY AND DIRECTOR
OF EMPRESS FARAH'S SPECIAL BUREAU, IS BEING TOUTED AS FUTURE
HEAD OF SUCH A WING. HE HIMSELF HAS SAID THAT A THIRD WING
WILL BE FORMED ONLY IF IT WILL NOT BECOME "A MERE SHOWPIECE

WITH NO PROGRAM, NOR PLATFORM, NOR PROJECTS, SUCH AS ITS PREDECESSORS." NAHAVANDI WHO HAS AS MANY--IF NOT MORE--GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES AS EITHER ANSARY OR MAJIDI IS PRESIDENT OF THE GROUP FOR THE STUDY OF IRANIAN PROBLEMS, A GROUP WHICH IS STUDYING THE IDEA OF TRANSFORMING ITSELF INTO A THIRD WING. REPORTEDLY THE GROUP IS NOT UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOR OF "POLITICIZING" ITSELF, FEARING THAT IT MIGHT BE DRAWN AWAY FROM ITS CURRENT RESEARCH ENDEAVORS AND REDUCED TO ISSUING RESTATEMENTS OF PRINCIPLE AS THE PRESENT WINGS. AHMAD QOREISHI, CHANCELLOR OF NATIONAL UNIVERSITY AND PRESIDENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PARTY, TOLD AMBASSADOR JUNE 10 THAT MOST LIKELY THERE WILL BE THREE WINGS AND NAHAVANDI, WHOM QOREISHI CONSIDERS COMPETENT AND AMBITIOUS, WILL BECOME THE THIRD COORDINATOR. PURPOSE OF THIRD WING WOULD BE TO APPEAL TO INTELLECTUALS AND GALVANIZE THEIR SUPPORT IN A WAY PARTY HAD NOT BEEN ABLE YET TO DO.

3. IN RELATED PARTY ACTIVITY, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS WERE ELECTED MAY 20 BY THE 2,000 MEMBER CENTRAL COUNCIL OF THE PARTY. AMONG THE 55 ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS ARE TWO SENATORS AND 32 MAJLIS DEPUTIES. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE HAD DIRECT BEARING ON SUBSEQUENT JUNE 10 ELECTION OF PARTY'S 15 ELECTED POLITBURO SEATS. (MEMBERSHIP LISTS OF TWO BODIES WILL BE TRANSMITTED SEPARATELY VIA AIRGRAM) SHARPLY CONTESTED ELECTION GAVE PARLIAMENTARIANS 13 OF THE 15 SEATS AND RENEWED THE TERM OF QOREISHI AS PRESIDENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. CONFIDENTIAL

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TWO VICE PRESIDENTS, HOSSAIN ESKANDARI AND SEIFOLLAH AFSHAR, AND TWO SECRETARIES, NOZAR SADEQI AND FARHANG BEITVAND, WERE ALSO ELECTED. IN ADDITION TO THE 15 ELECTED MEMBERS, THERE ARE NINE EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS IN CONSEQUENCE OF THEIR PARTY OFFICE, AND SIX NOMINATED BY THE PRIME MINISTER FROM AMONG MINISTERS OR OTHER HIGH GOI OFFICIALS. THESE LATTER SIX ARE YET TO BE NOMINATED.

4. COMMENT: ALL THIS ACTIVITY HAS BEEN ACCOMPANIED BY WIDE COVERAGE IN ALL MEDIA AND QUIET HO-HUMS BY GENERAL PUBLIC. UP TO PRESENT MOST IRANIANS HAVE APPEARED GENUINELY PUZZLED BY PARTY MACHINATIONS. THIS HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED BY THE SHAH WHO SEEMS WILLING TO TRY, THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE SHAKE UP, TO PUT SOME SPARK INTO PARTY. AS ONE MINISTER WHO WAS PREVIOUSLY VERY ACTIVE IN THE PARTY ADMITTED TO DCM JUNE 11, THE PARTY COMMANDS ONLY A MINORITY OF THE PEOPLE AND MUST WORK ON BUILDING ITS POPULAR BASE IF IT IS TO LAST. HOW MUCH DIVERGENCE OF OPINION WILL BE TOLERATED IS A QUESTION WHICH REMAINS IN MINDS OF MANY. ONE HINT MAY HAVE COME IN SHAH'S JUNE 8 ADDRESS TO GROUP FOR STUDY OF IRANIAN PROBLEMS (REFTEL) IN WHICH HE IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT APART FROM THE INITIAL SIX PRINCIPLES OF THE REVOLUTION, WHICH DEAL WITH THE COUNTRY'S

NATURAL RESOURCES BECOMING PUBLIC PROPERTY, THE OTHER PRINCIPLES ARE OPEN TO DISCUSSION AND REPLACEMENT BY ANY IDEAS WHICH MIGHT PROVE BETTER. THE SHAH WOULD OBVIOUSLY LIKE TO HAVE THE PARTY COOPT (AND THUS CONTROL) COMPETING IDEAS ON IRAN'S POLICIES AND FUTURE RATHER THAN HAVE THE IDEAS CONTINUE TO SEARCH FOR ALTERNATIVE FORA.
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